



Photo by SSgt. Steve Ball

Students at RAF Lakenheath Elementary School take advantage of some "quiet time" to work on homework.

DODDS students to be among first to take nationally standardized tests

**By Linda Kozaryn
American Forces Press Service**

WASHINGTON—Department of Defense Dependent Schools students were among the first to take nationally standardized exams as part of a campaign to make American education the best.

Education is a top priority. It holds the key to America's future in the 21st century, President Clinton said. Clinton promoted

his national education goals during a March 13 trip to North Carolina. Defense Secretary William Cohen and Education Secretary Richard Riley accompanied the president, who called for schools throughout the nation to meet national standards in reading and math.

"We have to have a nation in which every 8-year-old can read independently, every 12-year-old can log into the Internet, every 18-year-old can go to college and every adult American can keep on learning throughout an entire lifetime," Clinton told

state legislators in Raleigh. "We have to meet our national goal of connecting every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000."

Maryland, Michigan and North Carolina were the first three states to volunteer to give standardized exams in fourth grade reading and eight grade math. DODDS officials asked that their students be among the first to take the tests, Clinton said.

DOD's 66 stateside and 167 overseas dependent schools educate about 115,000 children each year, the president said. These schools provide a good kick-off point for the standards movement because military children come from every racial and ethnic background, and they change schools often as parents move from base to base, he said.

"Because of this mobility," the president said, "no group of students better underscore the need for common national standards and a uniform way of measuring progress. If standards can work in these schools, they can work anywhere."

Starting in 1999, students from Wiesbaden AB, Germany, to Kadena AB in Okinawa, Japan, will learn the same material and take the same national tests as students in North Carolina.

"We can make our public schools just like our military, the best on Earth, if, like our military, we are willing to adhere to high, rigorous standards for all people, regardless of their background," Clinton said.

DOD's leadership is deeply committed to providing quality education for service members and their children, said Cohen. "We look forward to participating in the president's initiative on national standards of excellence in education," he said. "This is going to help gauge the performance of our students by both national and international standards."

See Testing page 13



Photo by SSgt. Steve Ball

Best wheels competition

SSgt. Robert Redfoot, 48th Equipment Maintenance Squadron, puts the finishing touches on a fork lift for the wing best wheels competition. A1C Michael Mosher and Redfoot prepared the vehicle which took first place in the competition. Second place went to A1C Daniel Thresher and third went to Stephen Bunning, both from the 48th Supply Squadron.